

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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## DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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Reply To: (213) 738-4601  
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April 15, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.  
Director of Mental Health

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "MJS", is written over the name "Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.".

SUBJECT: **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT SKID ROW SERVICES  
QUARTERLY REPORT – APRIL 2009**

This memo provides the latest status report regarding continuing Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funded programs in the Skid Row area in response to your Board's April 3, 2007 motion instructing the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to take several actions related to efforts to reduce homelessness in Skid Row in coordination with communities outside of Skid Row.

Your Board instructed DMH to provide a quarterly progress report on the MHSA community-based services and supports planned for Skid Row including:

- Progress on implementation of programs planned for Skid Row, including Service Area Navigator Teams, Crisis Resolution Services, Full Service Partnerships, Wellness Centers, and the development of housing options;
- Tracking outcome measures for MHSA funded programs in the Skid Row area; and
- Tracking the number of clients who refuse medical treatment for alcohol and drug abuse.

We will continue to provide quarterly reports, as instructed.

MJS:TB:LAH:oc

Attachment

c: Sachi A. Hami, Executive Officer

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT  
SKID ROW SERVICES PROGRESS REPORT**

**April 15, 2009**

On April 3, 2007, the Board of Supervisors approved the Department of Mental Health's (DMH) request to utilize Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding to implement programs to reduce homelessness and promote wellness and recovery in the Skid Row area. Since that time, the Department has implemented the following programs:

- Crisis Resolution Service (CRS) at the Downtown Mental Health Center (DMHC) provides short term, intensive mental health and supportive services, including comprehensive assessment, medication evaluation and management, emergency shelter placement, and the initiation of benefits establishment.
- Skid Row Management Team (SRMT) provides overall administration, management and coordination of existing services and the development of new services in collaboration with local stakeholder planning groups.
- Client Run Wellness Center (CRWC) for the Skid Row area to serve individuals that no longer require intensive mental health services. On September 9, 2008 the Board of Supervisors approved the Board letter awarding Emotional Health Association dba SHARE!, a contract with DMH, to operate that CRWC in the Skid Row area. The Skid Row Management Team, along with the Service Planning Area (SPA) 5 management team and Contracts has worked collaboratively to effect the implementation of this program. This month SHARE! has begun providing services at their new site in the downtown Los Angeles area.
- A directly operated Wellness Center has been planned for the Skid Row area since shortly after the passage of the MHSA. On March 1, 2009, the Department accomplished this goal with the transformation of the DMHC outpatient services to an enhanced Wellness Center. This transformation also included the creation of a Field Capable Clinical Services (FCCS) team that will provide needed mental health services for clients at the impending Leavey Center and to those residing in the area's shelters and Single Room Occupancy Hotels. With the concurrent implementation of the SHARE! CRWC in the area, mental health clients will have an array of Wellness Center programming to address their individual mental health needs.

DMH MHSA funded services in the Skid Row area serve individuals in need of an array of integrated mental health and other treatment services and supports. Other MHSA funded programs that service the Skid Row area include the DMHC Full Service Partnership (FSP) program, and the Service Area 4 Navigator Team (SANT 4) which are discussed below.



### **Full Service Partnership (FSP)**

DMHC FSP program was implemented in December 2006 and serves a maximum of 180 consumers. As of April 8, 2009 for which the outcome measures below are compiled, the number of enrollees is now 162 clients. This represents a decrease of 10 clients from last report, and reflects the graduation of some clients to lower levels of care, the criminal adjudication of others, and 1 client that was placed on LPS Conservatorship and enrolled in a locked treatment facility. However, there are 12 clients currently involved in various stages of the enrollment process. There has been a continued effort to identify and enroll clients that can benefit from the intensity of services provided through FSP programming, while moving other clients that no longer require an FSP program to lower levels of care. These alternate programs may consist of directly operated Wellness Center services; CRWC services; along with employment, and ongoing support from a private mental health provider; and/or other services determined by the individualized needs of those clients. The outcomes described below illustrate the continuing successful efforts of DMHC FSP to reduce homelessness, incarceration, and acute psychiatric hospitalization.

- 8% reduction in days hospitalized/year prior to partnership vs. post-partnership;
- 81% reduction in days homeless/year prior to partnership vs. post partnership;
- 30% reduction in days incarcerated/year prior to partnership vs. post partnership; and
- 66% of the 162 FSP clients have a co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issue and are actively engaged in appropriate treatment ranging from 12 Step meetings to FSP Skid Row Co-Occurring Recovery and Empowerment (SCORE) treatment programming.

### **Service Area 4 Navigation Team (SANT)**

SANT 4 covers a wide and diverse area, which includes the Skid Row area. SANT links individuals of all ages to specialized mental health services such as FSP, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Adult Targeted Case Management Services (ATCMS). One of the methods utilized by SANT 4 to accomplish its goals is through the Impact Unit. The Impact Unit serves a critical role in ensuring linkage to community programs and services. Meetings are held semi-monthly to assist Service Area 4's DMH contracted and directly operated programs the opportunity to review individual case referrals, and to determine the most appropriate specialized programs (FSP, ACT, and ATCMS) to serve individual consumers.

The goals of SANT 4 are:

- Linkage to housing resources;
- Successful community reintegration for persons with mental illness from institutional settings;
- Provision of services for underserved, un-served and inappropriately served consumers with mental illness through linkage to appropriate type and level of care;
- Reduction in homelessness in the Skid Row area;
- Promotion of MHSA services in the community in collaboration with service providers and community agencies; and
- Successful outreach and engagement efforts by contracted and directly operated programs that identify and link prospective consumers to services.

During the last quarter, SANT 4 has:

Received 82 referrals for adult consumers age 26-59 for specialized programs (ACT, FSP, and ATCMS). Of the referrals:

51 referrals were received from non Skid Row areas

- 34 were successfully enrolled in FSP
- 14 pre-authorized for FSP
- 3 refused specialized services

31 consumers were referred from the Skid Row area

- 9 successfully enrolled in FSP
- 19 currently pre-authorized for FSP services
- 3 refused specialized services

Received 44 referrals for Transition Age Youth (TAY-age 16-25 years)

- 4 enrolled in FSP
- 12 pre-authorized for FSP
- 28 not assigned



### **Housing Trust Fund**

A Countywide Housing Trust Fund of \$11.5 million has been established to support the development of new permanent supportive housing for people with psychiatric disabilities. The Housing Trust Fund will provide funds for on-site supportive services and/or project-based operating subsidies for supportive housing projects as well as supportive services for scattered site housing projects. The Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide supportive services and/or to receive operating subsidies through the MHSA Housing Trust Fund was released as projected on January 23, 2008. The Department held a mandatory Proposer's Conference on February 6, 2008 with 238 people in attendance. The Department received 62 Letters of Intent to apply for the funds. Review of the 33 proposals received revealed requests for supportive services funding and operating expenses totaling over \$42 million. Six evaluation panels were convened to review and score the proposals.

The Department upon Board of Supervisors approval anticipates announcing awards in spring 2009. On September 16, 2008, the Department notified the twelve agencies that had been recommended to receive supportive services funding through the Housing Trust Fund RFP. The Countywide Housing, Employment, and Education Resource Development (CHEERD) Division has conducted several debriefing meetings for both those projects who were recommended for funding as well as those who were not recommended for funding. The CHEERD Division has completed the contract negotiation process with the twelve recommended agencies. The Department has completed a draft Board letter requesting approval from the Board of Supervisors to enter into five-year Agreement for Supportive Services. It is anticipated that this request will go before the Board of Supervisors May 19th.

### **Housing Development**

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Corporation, which provides needed housing for homeless individuals in the Skid Row area, was notified in June 2007 that they were awarded \$5.2 million through the Governor's Homeless Initiative to develop the Winston Apartments, a 40-unit permanent supportive housing project. The \$5.2 million will include funding for capital development and a capitalized operating reserve. As a condition of funding, the Governor's Homeless Initiative required that local county mental health departments would commit MHSA funds for the provision of mental health services or FSP level services for the residents of the funded units. DMH, through DMHC's FSP Program, has committed to provide mental health services to qualifying residents of the Winston Apartments. Due to the current State funding freeze, the construction start date has been pushed back to August 2009. It is anticipated that the units will be available for leasing in October 2010.



SRO Housing Corporation has also secured \$14.6 million through a variety of funding sources, including Los Angeles Housing Department's Permanent Supportive Housing Program, Los Angeles County's Community Development Commission, and tax credits to develop the James Woods Apartments. The James Woods Apartments will include 53 single room occupancy units, of which 31 will be for the special needs population-chronically homeless with a mental illness. DMHC's FSP Program will collaborate with SRO Housing Corporation to provide mental health services for qualified residents of the 31 units that are reserved for special needs populations-persons that are chronically homeless with mental illness. As of this date, the James Woods Apartments are under construction with a scheduled completion date of April 2009. It is anticipated that the 31 units that have been identified for special needs population (chronically homeless with a mental illness) will be available for leasing in May 2009.

### **Mental Health Services Act Housing Program**

On August 6, 2007 the California Department of Mental Health (State DMH) and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) launched the MHSA Housing Program that provides funding to support capital development and capitalized operating subsidies for supportive housing for individuals with psychiatric disabilities and their families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. State DMH estimates that it will allocate approximately \$115 million to Los Angeles County over the next three years for the development of supportive housing, \$40 million of which can be used for capitalized operating subsidies.

In November 2007, DMH released the Expression of Interest, a non-competitive solicitation inviting interested parties to submit a Letter of Interest in response to the notice of available funding for capital development and operating subsidies. In mid-March, an introductory information and training was held for individuals and organizations not familiar with the requirements associated with supportive housing projects and/or receiving public funds. Also included were those individuals and organizations that had submitted incomplete Letters of Interest and/or those reviewed by the MHSA Housing Advisory Board but that had not been recommended for further development at this point due to insufficient information, or other issues; and those that had further questions, or had expressed an interest in providing SHARE! housing. This included individuals and organizations that were not traditional supportive housing developers. On June 10, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved a Board letter authorizing the Department to sign an assignment agreement permitting the transfer of the Los Angeles County allocation of \$115 million to the CalHFA for the administration of the MHSA Housing Program.

The Department has received forty-one Letters of Interest in various stages of development from the concept stage to fully developed projects with committed funding resources. Of the forty-one proposed housing projects, the MHSA Housing Advisory



Board identified twenty-two as viable projects and recommended that the Department initiate further planning and development with the project sponsors. CHEERD staff has met with the project sponsors to provide technical assistance to those projects that were not recommended for further development. Because this funding is being offered through a non-competitive solicitation process, project sponsors may revise their housing proposals and resubmit them for consideration at will.

Proceeding through the MHSA Housing Program application process, fourteen of the twenty-two projects previously recommended for further development by the MHSA Housing Advisory Board have remained active. The Department has submitted six applications on behalf of the project sponsors to the State DMH and CalHFA for funding. Three of them, The Young Burlington Apartments, The Courtyards in Long Beach and Glenoaks Gardens Apartments have been approved for funding by State DMH and CalHFA. The other three are still being reviewed by the state. The remaining eight projects are in various stages of the local application process: four project sponsors are currently initiating the service plan review process, one is currently posted on the Department's web site for the 30-day public review and comment period, one is currently involved in the technical review process, and two have been invited to submit their full application to the State DMH and CalHFA. Four projects, the Figueroa Apartments, The Villas at Gower, Daniel's Village, and The Young Burlington Apartments are being re-posted on the Department's web site due to increased funding requests.

### **Crisis Resolution Services (CRS)**

CRS is a short term (60 days or less), outpatient based, intensive, clinical and case management program that provides crisis intervention and stabilization for new and returning, disengaged clients. Services include but are not limited to: emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing, referral for medical and dental services, benefits establishment, intensive case management, psychiatric services and medication, short-term psychotherapy, and crisis intervention.

CRS was implemented on October 11, 2007 providing two days of service weekly. Days of operation were gradually increased as new staff was hired. On May 12, 2008, CRS began operating five days a week, and on September 6, 2008, Saturday morning coverage was added for a total six days a week of program operations.

Since implementation, CRS has:

- Opened 2,611 new cases, averaging 7 new intakes daily;
- Reduced attrition rate among newly enrolled clients by 42%;

- Provided linkage to emergency, transitional or permanent housing to 92% of homeless clients on day of screening or intake; and
- Engaged 63% of all clients with a co-occurring mental health and substance use/abuse issue(s). As a result, these clients enrolled in treatment or peer counseling services. Motivational engagement efforts with the remaining 37% are ongoing.

The program provides frequent client follow-up appointments with program staff, and employs a “whatever-it-takes” approach to addressing individual needs, including mental health services, housing, physical health care, and assistance with benefits establishment.

### **Skid Row Management Team (SRMT)**

During this past quarter the DMH SRMT continued its ongoing efforts to sustain engagement with community providers and stakeholder groups, including consumers, and loft dwellers to obtain critical input about the many issues affecting the Skid Row area. The SRMT has held monthly meetings of the Skid Row Community Advisory Board (SRCAB), and with the Skid Row Homeless Healthcare Initiative. Both of these entities are collectives of Skid Row stakeholders (including consumers) that are dedicated to collaborative and integrative efforts to develop more accessible, and effective social and health care services.

SRMT activities over the past quarter have included:

- Continued collaboration with DMH Contracts Division and the Management Team of Service Area 5 to amend the existing contract of Emotional Health Association dba SHARE! and implementation of Client Run Wellness Services to individuals in the Skid Row area;
- Hosted and participated in weekly meetings of the Skid Row (Family) Assessment Team with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Public Health (DPH), and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) regarding the ongoing provision of collaborative services to homeless families with minors;
- Represented DMH in the on-going Levey Center inter-agency service integration planning workgroups led by Chief Executive Office Service Integration Branch. Planning has proceeded with the development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding, and agencies further defining their respective staffing levels and functions. Build out has begun on the facility site, and other participant agencies are JWCH; Weingart Center Foundation; Homeless Healthcare of Los



Angeles; and County agencies: Departments of Public Health; Health Services; and Alcohol and Drug Programs Administration;

- Hosted monthly meetings with DMH SRCAB, which is a local forum for consumers, families, service providers and community representatives to provide the SRMT with information, advice and recommendations regarding the mental health service needs in the Skid Row community;
- Represented DMH at the Skid Row Homeless Healthcare Initiative, which serves to develop collaborative and integrated physical and behavioral healthcare initiatives in the Skid Row area;
- Participated in the monthly DMH Service Area 4 Executive Providers Meetings;
- Continued collaboration with the Service Area 4 Management Team to coordinate the transition and transfer of oversight responsibility for DMH contract agencies in the Skid Row area to the SRMT. Full transition of responsibility will occur upon the appointment of a permanent District Chief for the DMH SRMT;
- Participation in monthly Service Area Advisory Committee (SAAC) meetings for Service Area IV. SAAC meetings are comprised of community stakeholders, including residents, persons who work in the area, consumers, family members of consumers and social service agencies. The meetings serve to educate the public about the MHSA, including priorities such as Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI), and solicit input and feedback from the public about DMH's implementation of MHSA programs;
- Participation in two PEI community forums in Service Area 5, as well as a PEI Steering Committee meeting, to collaborate with community stakeholders (including residents and consumers) to provide input on mental health service needs in the area and priorities for MHSA funding for PEI services. Also appointed by the SAAC IV to serve on the PEI Steering Committee as a representative for social service agencies to advocate for the needs of consumers and programs in Skid Row and Service Area IV;
- Participation in the Los Angeles City/County Coordinating Council for Homeless Families' monthly working group meetings, to implement recommendations of the Los Angeles 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness that are specific to family homelessness, by ending and preventing family homelessness via increased inter-agency collaboration and service delivery, and increasing access to housing. The work group is exploring ways to address the increase in family homelessness due to the current mortgage and foreclosure crisis; and

- Participated in Service Area 4 Birth to 5 Collaborative Meetings to examine and address the service needs of children in this age range in the Metropolitan Los Angeles area, which includes Skid Row. The 2007 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count tallied 2,540 minors in homeless families in the Metropolitan Los Angeles area, 51% (or 1,300) of which were age 5 or younger.

SRMT continues to work collaboratively with area stakeholders, service providers, and residents to enhance mental health services and supports in the Skid Row area.

### **Summary**

In summary, the Department of Mental Health continues to demonstrate significant progress in enhancing and increasing community based mental health, housing, and other resources in the Skid Row area through the development of newly funded MHSA programs, and ongoing collaborations with local stakeholders. Currently, this includes the transformation of Downtown Mental Health Center outpatient services to a directly operated Wellness Center and Field Capable Clinical Services; the opening of the SHARE! Client Run Wellness Center; and the future opening of integrated medical and behavioral services program at the Leavey Center. All of these programs focus on reducing homelessness for individuals with mental illness and breaking the costly cycle of emergency and inpatient care, and incarceration, while promoting recovery and successful community reintegration.